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LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER

SEPTEMBER RED MEAT PRODUCTION

WEST VIRGINIA— Commercial red meat production during September 2004 totaled 700,000 pounds. This was up 32 percent from August 2004, and up 2 percent from September 2003 production. Commercial red meat production is the carcass weight after slaughter including beef, veal, pork, and lamb and mutton. Individual commodity production is total live weight of commercial slaughter.

Commercial cattle slaughter totaled 841,000 pounds live weight, down 5 percent from September 2003. Cattle slaughter totaled 900 head, unchanged from the previous year. The average live weight, at 959 pounds, was down 1 pound from a year ago.

Commercial calf slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

Commercial hog slaughter totaled 214,000 pounds live weight, down 0.5 of a percent from last year. Hog slaughter totaled 800 head, down 100 head from the previous year. The average live weight, at 259 pounds, was up 14 pounds from the previous year.

Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter was not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.

UNITED STATES- Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 3.91 billion pounds in September, down 3 percent from the 4.01 billion pounds produced in September 2003.

Beef production, at 2.10 billion pounds, was 9 percent below the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.74 million head, down 13 percent from September 2003. The average live weight was up 38 pounds from the previous year, at 1,266 pounds.

Veal production totaled 13.0 million pounds, 15 percent below September a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 67,300 head, down 18 percent from September 2003. The average live weight was 13 pounds above last year, at 321 pounds.

Pork production totaled 1.77 billion pounds, up 6 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 9.00 million head, 5 percent above September 2003. The average live weight was 2 pounds above the previous year, at 265 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 16.3 million pounds, was down 4 percent from September 2003. Sheep slaughter totaled 243,600 head, 5 percent below last year. The average live weight was 133 pounds, up 2 pounds from September a year ago.

January to September 2004 commercial red meat production was 33.8 billion pounds, down 3 percent from 2003. Accumulated beef production was down 9 percent from last year, veal was down 11 percent, pork was up 4 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 2 percent.

September 2003 contained 22 weekdays (including one holiday) and 4 Saturdays. **September 2004** contained 22 weekdays (including one holiday) and 4 Saturdays.

CHICKENS & EGGS

September Egg Production Up 3 Percent

U.S. egg production totaled 7.32 billion during September 2004, up 3 percent from last year. Production included 6.26 billion table eggs, and 1.06 billion hatching eggs, of which 996 million were broiler-type and 60 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during September 2004 averaged 343 million, up 3 percent from a year earlier. September egg production per 100 layers was 2,133 eggs, up slightly from September 2003.

September 2004 and **September 2003** both contained 22 weekdays, 4 Saturdays and 1 holiday.

All layers in the U.S. on October 1, 2004, totaled 344 million, up 3 percent from a year ago. The 344 million layers consisted of 285 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 55.8 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.61 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on October 1, 2004, averaged 71.3 eggs per 100 layers, up slightly from a year ago.

Laying flocks in the 30 major egg producing States produced 6.84 billion eggs during September 2004, up 3 percent from a year ago. The average number of layers during September, at 321 million, was up 3 percent from a year ago., at 320 million, was up 2 percent from a year ago.

Individual State estimates are available for the 30 major egg producing States. These States are as follows: AL, AR, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, HI, IL, IN, IA, ME, MD, MI, MN, MS, MO, NE, NY, NC, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, SD, TX, VA, WA, and WI and account for approximately 94 percent of the total U.S. egg production. Production for the other States are grouped into an "Other States" category and combined with the 30 States published individually to obtain a U.S. estimate.

Egg-Type Chicks Hatched Up 3 Percent

Egg-type chicks hatched during September totaled 36.8 million, up 3 percent from September 2003. Eggs in incubators totaled 33.7 million on October 1, 2004, up 13 percent from a year ago.

Domestic placements of egg-type pullet chicks for future hatchery supply flocks by leading breeders totaled 205,000 during September 2004, down 25 percent from September 2003.

Broiler Hatch Up 4 Percent

The September 2004 **hatch of broiler-type chicks**, at 770 million, was up 4 percent from September of the previous year. There were 617 million eggs in incubators on October 1, 2004, up 3 percent from a year earlier.

Leading breeders placed 7.76 million **broiler-type pullet chicks** for future domestic hatchery supply flocks during September 2004, up 17 percent from September 2003.

NOVEMBER CROP PRODUCTION

November Crop Production

UNITED STATES - Corn production is forecast at 11.7 billion bushels, up 1 percent from last month and 16 percent above 2003. Based on conditions as of November 1, the yield is expected to average 160.2 bushels per acre, up 1.8 bushels from October and 18.0 bushels above last year. If realized, both production and yield would be the largest on record. The previous records for both were set last year when production was estimated at 10.1 billion bushels and yield was 142.2 bushels per acre. Across the U.S., yields are forecast at record high levels in 19 of the 33 published corn States. With the exception of Wisconsin, yields in the Corn Belt States are forecast at record highs as weather conditions have been mostly favorable throughout the growing season.

Soybean production is forecast at 3.15 billion bushels, up 1 percent from October and 28 percent above 2003. If realized, this would be the largest U.S. soybean crop on record. Based on November 1 conditions, yields are expected to average a record high 42.6 bushels per acre, up 0.6 bushel from October and 8.7 bushels above last year. Producers in the Corn Belt, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the Carolinas are realizing higher yields than expected last month, while yield prospects decreased as harvest progressed in North Dakota and Minnesota. Area for harvest in the U.S. is forecast at 74.0 million acres, unchanged from last month but up 2 percent from 2003.

All cotton production is forecast at 22.5 million 480-pound bales, up 5 percent from October and up 23 percent from last year's production. Yield is expected to average a record high 818 pounds per harvested acre, up 36 pounds from last month. If realized, the yield will be 88 pounds above the previous record high yield established in 2003. Record high yields are expected in Arkansas, California, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas. Harvested area, at 13.2 million acres, is unchanged from October but 10 percent above 2003.

AGRICULTURAL CHEMICAL USAGE

U.S. Highlights

FIELD CROPS: Field crop data on restricted use pesticides were compiled from the Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) in 35 Program States. Targeted crops in the 2003 ARMS included barley, corn, fall potatoes, sorghum, and upland cotton. The Program States accounted for 80 to 96 percent of the U.S. acreage for these crops.

Corn: Atrazine was again the most widely used restricted use herbicide applied to corn, with 68 percent of the corn acres treated. Acetochlor was used on 26 percent of the corn acres. Restricted use insecticides were applied to a range of less than 1 percent to 7 percent of the corn planted acres. Cyfluthrin and tebuprimiphos were both applied to 7 percent of the

acres planted to corn. Though one of the smaller percentages of area applied, terbufos had the largest total pounds applied, at 1,660,000.

Potatoes, Fall: EPTC, a restricted use herbicide, was applied on 20 percent of the fall potatoes planted acreage. Cyfluthrin, esfenvalerate, and methamidophos were the three most commonly applied active ingredients reported in the restricted insecticides class for fall potatoes. Metam-sodium, a soil fumigant, was applied to 25 percent of the fall potato acres.

FRUIT CROPS: Growers in 12 Program States were surveyed to obtain chemical use data on 24 selected fruit crops in 2003. The data on restricted use applications cover the period immediately following harvest of the 2002 crop through harvest of the 2003 crop.

A limited number of restricted use herbicides were applied to fruit crops in 2003. Paraquat was applied to many of the targeted crops, at application percentages ranging up to 74 percent of the raspberries acreage.

Several restricted use insecticides were used extensively on fruit crops in the Program States. Esfenvalerate was applied to 67 percent of the apricot acreage, and diazinon was applied to 52 percent of the raspberry acreage. Other restricted use insecticides applied to more than 30 percent of planted acres were: abamectin on grapefruit, tangelos, and tangerines; and esfenvalerate on nectarines and peaches.

Chlorothalonil continues to be the most commonly used restricted use fungicide and was applied to 83 percent of the tart cherry acres. The second most commonly applied fungicide was copper oxide, used on 10 percent of the table grapes and 7 percent of the wine grapes.

Restricted use pesticides used as "other chemicals" applied included strychnine, methyl bromide, chloropicrin, and zinc phosphide.

NURSERY and FLORICULTURE: Nursery and floriculture data include pesticide use in calendar year 2003 related to the production of nursery and floriculture crops in 6 major producing states: California, Florida, Michigan, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Trained enumerators personally interviewed nursery and floriculture operators or managers to obtain information on chemical applications made on sampled operations.

A wide variety of restricted use active ingredients were reported for all nursery and floriculture. The most common restricted use herbicide applied by producers in the 6 Program States to nursery and floriculture products was atrazine, at 40,100 total pounds.

Numerous restricted use insecticide active ingredients were reported on nursery and floriculture products. When comparing total pounds applied, permethrin and diflubenzuron were the two most heavily applied restricted use insecticides.

Methyl bromide and chloropicrin were overall the most widely used restricted use active ingredients, with total pounds applied at 449,600 pounds and 255,000 pounds, respectively, reported in the Program States.

FARM LABOR

Hired Workers Down 2 Percent, Wage Rates Up 3 Percent From a Year Ago

There were 1,173,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of October 10-16, 2004, down 2 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 851,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 322,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.30 per hour during the October 2004 reference week, up 25 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.60 per hour, up 18 cents from last October, while livestock workers earned \$8.91 per hour compared with \$8.64 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$8.67 per hour, was up 20 cents from last year.

The number of hours worked averaged 40.5 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 1 percent from a year ago.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in the Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota), Northeast I (New England and New York), and Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico) regions, and in Florida. After a cool, wet growing season, reference week weather in the Northern Plains region was virtually ideal. This allowed field crop harvests to progress rapidly, necessitating more hired workers. In the Northeast I region, a return to dry, seasonable conditions compared to last year's rain and strong winds allowed field activities to accelerate. Therefore, the demand for field workers was stronger. Nurseries were gearing up for fall plantings in the Mountain III region, and cotton harvest progress exceeded last year's pace, both of which caused more field workers to be needed. Also, more livestock workers were required due to increased movement of cattle from summer pastures. In Florida, warm and dry conditions returned after several weeks of tropical storms, allowing most field activities to resume. Thus, more field workers were necessary.

CATTLE ON FEED

U.S. Cattle on Feed Up 3 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.3 million head on November 1, 2004. The inventory was 3 percent above November 1, 2003 and 5 percent above November 1, 2002.

Placements in feedlots during October totaled 2.70 million, 3 percent below 2003 but 13 percent above 2002. This is the second lowest placements for the month of October since the series began in 1996. Net

placements were 2.64 million head. During October, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 912,000, 600-699 pounds were 764,000, 700-799 pounds were 529,000, and 800 pounds and greater were 496,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during October totaled 1.80 million, 3 percent below 2003 and 9 percent below 2002.

Other disappearance totaled 66,000 during October, 35 percent below 2003 and 21 percent below 2002.

DECEMBER AGRICULTURAL UPCOMING

A sample of West Virginia farmers will be part of the national survey of producers who will be contacted for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's annual December survey. This survey will be conducted from November 29 through December 15, by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service by contacting farmers by mail, telephone and personal interview. The purpose of this survey is to obtain information to make estimates for the 2004 crop year. Commodities targeted by this survey are corn, soybeans, tobacco and hay. Winter wheat seeding for the 2005 crop year, December 1 inventories of hogs, chickens and grain storage capacity are also collected.

This survey provides information necessary to make the objective, reliable, comprehensive estimates that are essential to an orderly marketing system. Only NASS, through its network of State Statistical offices, can provide impartial statistics to farmers, agribusinesses, policy makers, and the general public.

We depend on the voluntary cooperation of the producers in our sample. A high response rate will ensure that West Virginia agriculture is fully and accurately represented in the regional and national picture. As always, all individual information collected will be kept strictly confidential. Results of the survey will be released beginning on January 12, 2005.

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Announcement

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